

U.S. Census Bureau

Facts for Features: Asian
Pacific American Heritage
Month: May 2003

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Asian Pacific American Heritage Month: May 2003

In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two key anniversaries: the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants (May 7, 1843) and the completion of the transcontinental railroad (May 10, 1869). In 1992, Congress expanded the week to a month-long celebration.

12.5 million

Estimated number of U.S. residents as of July 1, 2001, who say they are Asian or Asian in combination with one or more other races. This group comprises 4.4 percent of the total population. During the preceding 15 months, the number of people who were part of this group increased 3.8 percent, more than triple the growth rate of the entire U.S. population.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html)

935,600

Estimated number of U.S. residents as of July 1, 2001, who say they are native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander or native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander in combination with one or more other races. This group comprises 0.3 percent of the total population. During the preceding 15 months, the number of people who were part of this group increased 3.2 percent.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html)

Income and Poverty

\$53,635

The annual median income of Asian and Pacific islander households, the highest of any racial group. Their annual income is just under the level reached in 2000 (\$57,313 in 2001 dollars), which matched an all-time high.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html)

\$24,277

Annual per capita income for Asians and Pacific islanders, after adjusting for inflation, unchanged from 2000.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html)

10.2

Poverty rate for Asians and Pacific islanders, which remains at an all-time low.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html)

Education

47

Percentage of Asians and Pacific islanders age 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher. Asians and Pacific islanders had the highest proportion of college graduates of any race or ethnic group. The corresponding rate for all adults in this age group is 27 percent.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-51.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-51.html)

87

Percentage of Asians and Pacific islanders 25 and over who are high school graduates. The corresponding rate for all adults in this age group is 84 percent.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-51.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-51.html)

16

Percentage of Asians and Pacific islanders 25 and over with an advanced degree (e.g., master's, Ph.D., M.D. or J.D.). This percentage represented 1.3 million Asians and Pacific islanders. The corresponding rate for all adults in this age group was 9 percent.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-51.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-51.html)

\$3.1 million

Estimated work-life earnings for full-time, year-round Asian and Pacific islander workers with an advanced degree. For Asians and Pacific islanders, more education means higher career earnings: those with a bachelor's degree only would earn \$1.8 million and those with a high school diploma only, \$1.1 million.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-95.html>>

Languages

7.0 million

The number of people who speak an Asian or Pacific island language at home. Of this number, 5.4 million speak English "well" or "very well." The most commonly spoken Asian or Pacific island languages are Chinese (2.0 million speakers), Tagalog (1.2 million), Vietnamese (1.0 million) and Korean (894,000).

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

Coming to America

8.3 million

The number of U.S. foreign-born residents who were born in Asia. Asian-born residents comprise one-fourth of the nation's total foreign-born population.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-42.html>>

- The five largest contributors to the nation's foreign-born population from Asia are China, the Philippines, India, Vietnam and Korea.

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

- Close to half (46 percent) of the nation's foreign-born population from Asia lives in three metropolitan areas: Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-18.html>>

48

Percentage of the foreign-born population from Asia who are naturalized U.S. citizens. The corresponding rate for the foreign-born population as a whole is 37 percent.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-42.html>>

88

Percentage of Asians and Pacific islanders who are either foreign-born themselves or

have at least one foreign-born parent. <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-18.html>>

Serving Our Nation

284,000

Number of Asian American military veterans. There were 29,000 veterans who were native Hawaiian or other Pacific islander Americans.

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

Population Distribution

Nation

A total of 2.7 million Asian American residents reported as Chinese (except Taiwanese) or Chinese (except Taiwanese) in combination with one or more other races or Asian groups, making Chinese the leading Asian group. Filipino (2.4 million) and Asian Indian (1.9 million) follow. The largest Pacific islander groups were native Hawaiian (401,000) and Samoan (133,000).

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn59.html>>

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-14.pdf>>

49

Proportion of Asian Americans who live in the western part of the United States. The vast majority

(73 percent) of native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander Americans resided in the West. <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn59.html>>

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-14.pdf>>

96

Percentage of Asians and Pacific islanders who live in a metropolitan area.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn173.html>>

States

4.2 million

The number of California residents who are Asian, making the Golden State the state with the highest number of Asian Americans. New York, Hawaii, Texas and New Jersey follow, in order. Hawaii had the largest number of native Hawaiians and other

Pacific islanders with 283,000, followed by California with 221,000.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn59.html>>

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-14.pdf>>

58

The percentage of Hawaii's population that is of the Asian race, tops in the nation. California (12 percent) follows. For native Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders, Hawaii also was No. 1, at 23 percent.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn59.html>>

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-14.pdf>>

Places

872,780

The number of people in New York City who are of the Asian race. New York leads all the nation's places in number of Asians. Los Angeles is second with 407,440, followed by San Jose, San Francisco and Honolulu, each with 250,000 or more. Honolulu had the largest native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander population with

58,130. <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn59.html>>

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-14.pdf>>

68

Percentage of Honolulu residents who are Asian American. Among places with 100,000 or more residents, the only other with more than one-half of its population being Asian American is Daly City, Calif. (54 percent). All of the remaining cities among the top 10 are in California: Fremont, Sunnyvale, San Francisco, Irvine, Garden Grove, Santa Clara, Torrance and San Jose. Honolulu also led these places with 16 percent of its population being native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn59.html>>

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-14.pdf>>

Age Distribution

3.3 million

Number of people under 18 who are Asian or Asian in combination with one or more other races. The number for native Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders was 330,900.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html>>

929,000

Number of people age 65 or older who are Asian or Asian in combination with one or more other races. The number for native Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders was 47,300.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html)

Children and Families

2.6 million

The number of Asian American families. Of these, 80 percent consist of married couples, 54 percent include their own children under 18 and 46 percent were married couples with their own children under 18. For the 168,000 native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander families, the corresponding percentages were 67 percent, 60 percent and 41 percent. [<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet)

78

Percentage of Asian American children who live in a home maintained by both of their parents. For native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander children, the corresponding percentage is 58 percent.

[<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet)

Housing

2 million

Number of Asian and Pacific islander householders who own their own home; they represent 55 percent of all Asian and Pacific islander householders.

[<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/annual02/ann02t20.html>](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/annual02/ann02t20.html)

Computer Access

73

Percentage of the nation's non-Hispanic Asian and Pacific islander households with computers. In addition, 68 percent of these households have Internet access. Among all households, the corresponding percentages are 57 percent and 51 percent.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-32.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-32.html)

Voting

17

Percentage increase in the number of Asian and Pacific islander voters between the last two presidential elections. This reflected growth in the voting-age population and in U.S. citizenship of Asian and Pacific islanders. <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-31.html>>

The following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African American History Month (February)	Back to School
(August)	
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Labor Day
(Sept. 1)	
Women's History Month (March)	Grandparents
Day (Sept. 14)	
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Hispanic
Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)	
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Halloween
(Oct. 31)	
Older Americans Month (May)	American
Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month	
Mother's Day (May 11)	
(November)	
Father's Day (June 15)	Veterans
Day (Nov. 11)	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	Thanksgiving
Day (Nov. 27)	
Anniversary of Americans With Disabilities Act (July 26)	The Holiday
Season (December)	

Editor's note: Some of the preceding data were collected in surveys and are therefore subject to sampling error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau
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(301) 763-3030*

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